

Zero modes in a system of Aharonov–Bohm solenoids on the Lobachevsky plane

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Abstract

We consider a spin 1/2 charged particle on the Lobachevsky plane subjected to a magnetic field corresponding to a discrete system of Aharonov–Bohm solenoids. Let H^+ and H^- be the two components of the Pauli operator for spin up and down, respectively. We show that neither H^+ nor H^- has a zero mode if the number of solenoids is finite. On the other hand, a construction is described of an infinite periodic system of solenoids for which either H^+ or H^- has zero modes depending on the value of the flux carried by the solenoids.

1 Introduction

We consider a spin 1/2 charged particle on the Lobachevsky plane subjected to a time-independent magnetic field corresponding to a discrete system of singular flux tubes perpendicular to the plane. Let us denote by H^+ and H^- the two components of the Pauli operator for spin up and down, respectively. Our aim is to study zero modes in such systems. Since both H^+ and H^- are positive operators zero modes are automatically ground states of the quantum system.

The current paper extends analogous results known for the Euclidean plane to a non-flat space having a constant curvature equal to -1 . These results are based on the Aharonov-Casher observation [1] that the Pauli operators for spin 1/2 particles in a magnetic field are related to factorisable Schrödinger operators. It is well known that even in the case of a uniform magnetic field, the spectrum of the magnetic Schrödinger operator H changes drastically when changing the curvature of the base plane from zero to a constant negative value [4]. In particular, if the strength of the magnetic field is weak enough (more precisely, if the magnetic flux through a triangle with zero angles

is less than one quantum), then the spectrum of H is purely absolutely continuous in contrast to the zero curvature case in which the spectrum is pure point. We show that the Pauli operator with a finite number of Aharonov–Bohm fluxes exhibits a similar behavior: it has no zero modes on the Lobachevsky plane, whereas in the Euclidean case, the zero modes may exist in a finite system of solenoids, as analyzed in [3]. In this connection it is interesting to note that the constant negative curvature exerts no effect on the Berry phase for the zero-range potential well moving in the uniform constant magnetic field [2]. Furthermore, it has been shown in [8] that zero modes occur if the solenoids are arranged in an infinite plane lattice, and some generalizations and additional details of this result can be found in [9], [11]. Our Theorem 8 below is an extension of such results to the case of the Lobachevsky plane.

As it was already mentioned, the approach we use is based on the Aharonov–Casher ansatz. This makes it possible to employ the theory of analytic functions when constructing the zero modes. Let us now describe the problem in more detail and introduce the basic notation. Some additional details related to this method are contained e.g. in [5], [6].

Let M be an oriented Riemannian 2-dimensional manifold with a conformal metric

$$ds^2 = \frac{dz d\bar{z}}{\lambda^2(z, \bar{z})},$$

where $\lambda^2(z, \bar{z}) > 0$ (the function $\lambda^2(z, \bar{z})$ is called the *Poincaré metric*). The corresponding area 2-form is

$$d\sigma = \frac{dx \wedge dy}{\lambda^2(z, \bar{z})} = \frac{i}{2} \frac{dz \wedge d\bar{z}}{\lambda^2(z, \bar{z})}.$$

By definition, a magnetic field on M is an exact 2-form $b = Bd\sigma$, where the real-valued (generalized) function B is called the *strength* of the field b . Since b is exact, we have $b = da$ where the 1-form $a = a_x dx + a_y dy = a_z dz + a_{\bar{z}} d\bar{z}$ is a vector-potential of b . We set

$$a_z = \frac{1}{2}(a_x - ia_y), \quad a_{\bar{z}} = \frac{1}{2}(a_x + ia_y).$$

Hence,

$$\lambda^{-2}B = \partial_x a_y - \partial_y a_x = \frac{2}{i}(\partial_z a_{\bar{z}} - \partial_{\bar{z}} a_z).$$

We shall suppose that

$$a_x, a_y \in L^1_{\text{loc}}(M, d\sigma) \cap C^\infty(M \setminus \Omega),$$

for some discrete subset Ω of M . Moreover, we suppose that each point of Ω is a point of discontinuity of a_x or a_y . Under these hypotheses, Ω is determined by a in a unique way. In particular, a_x or a_y may be the imaginary and the real part of a meromorphic function, respectively.

Let us define the following operators in $L^2(M, d\sigma)$ with the domain $C_0^\infty(M \setminus \Omega)$:

$$P_x = -i\partial_x - a_x \equiv -i\nabla_x, \quad P_y = -i\partial_y - a_y \equiv -i\nabla_y,$$

$$\begin{aligned}\nabla_z &= \frac{1}{2}(\nabla_x - i\nabla_y) = \partial_z - ia_z, \quad \nabla_{\bar{z}} = \frac{1}{2}(\nabla_x + i\nabla_y) = \partial_{\bar{z}} - ia_{\bar{z}}, \\ T_{\pm} &= P_x \pm iP_y = -i\nabla_x \pm \nabla_y.\end{aligned}$$

Let us consider the quadratic form

$$h_{\max}^{\pm}(f) = \int_M \lambda^2 |T_{\pm} f|^2 d\sigma$$

with the domain

$$Q(h_{\max}^{\pm}) = \left\{ f \in L^2(M, d\sigma); \nabla_x f, \nabla_y f \in L^1_{\text{loc}}(M \setminus \Omega, d\sigma), \text{ and } \int_M \lambda^2 |T_{\pm} f|^2 d\sigma < \infty \right\}.$$

The quadratic form h_{\max}^{\pm} is closed and defines a self-adjoint operator H^{\pm} in $L^2(M, d\sigma)$. On $C_0^{\infty}(M \setminus \Omega)$ we have

$$\lambda^2 T_+ T_- = H^-, \quad \lambda^2 T_- T_+ = H^+,$$

and

$$\lambda^{-2} H^{\pm} = P_x^2 + P_y^2 \mp \lambda^{-2} B.$$

Clearly, both H^+ and H^- are positive operators.

Suppose that in the sense of distributions

$$\lambda^{-2} B = \frac{\partial^2 \varphi}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2 \varphi}{\partial y^2} \equiv \Delta \varphi$$

where φ is a regular distribution (a locally integrable function). Then for the vector potential one can choose

$$a_{\bar{z}} = i\partial_{\bar{z}}\varphi, \quad a_z = -i\partial_z\varphi,$$

and the zero modes of H^+ (resp. H^-), i.e., L^2 -solutions $\psi \neq 0$ to the equation $H^{\pm}\psi = 0$, have the form

$$\psi(z, \bar{z}) = \exp(\mp\varphi(z, \bar{z})) f(z, \bar{z}),$$

where f is a holomorphic (resp. antiholomorphic) function on $M \setminus \Omega$.

2 Finite number of Aharonov–Bohm solenoids

In what follows M will be the Lobachevsky plane which we shall model as the disc

$$\mathbb{D} = \{z \in \mathbb{C}; |z| < 1\} \text{ with } \lambda = \frac{1 - z\bar{z}}{2}.$$

Equivalently, one could model M as the upper half-plane $\mathbb{C}^+ = \{z \in \mathbb{C}; \text{Im } z > 0\}$ with $\lambda = (z - \bar{z})/(2i)$.

Proposition 1. *Let B be the magnetic field on M corresponding to a finite family of Aharonov–Bohm solenoids with non-zero fluxes. Then H^\pm has no zero modes.*

Proof. Let us consider the operator H^+ ; the proof is similar in the case of H^- . Let $a_k \in \mathbb{D}$, $k = 1, \dots, n$, be a finite set of points. Consider the function

$$\varphi(z, \bar{z}) = \prod_{k=1}^n |z - a_k|^{\theta_k}.$$

Then

$$\Delta \log(\varphi) = 2\pi \sum_{k=1}^n \theta_k \delta(z - a_k),$$

and the corresponding field strength equals

$$B(z, \bar{z}) = \frac{\pi}{2} \sum_{k=1}^n \theta_k (1 - |a_k|^2)^2 \delta(z - a_k).$$

Let us note that for the field $B = \frac{\pi}{2} \theta (1 - |a|^2)^2 \delta(z - a)$ the flux equals

$$\Phi = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_M B d\sigma = \theta.$$

As usual, due to the gauge symmetry one can assume that $0 < \theta_k < 1$ for all k . Let us suppose that H^+ has a zero mode ψ . Then

$$\psi(z, \bar{z}) = \prod_{k=1}^n |z - a_k|^{-\theta_k} f(z), \quad (1)$$

where f is holomorphic on the domain $\mathbb{D} \setminus \{a_1, \dots, a_n\}$. Since $\psi \in L^2(\mathbb{D}, d\sigma)$, the function f cannot have a pole nor an essential singularity at any of the points a_1, \dots, a_n , and therefore f has an analytic extension to the whole domain \mathbb{D} . Moreover, from (1) one deduces that $|f(z)| \leq \text{const} |\psi(z, \bar{z})|$ on \mathbb{D} and therefore $f \in L^2(\mathbb{D}, d\sigma)$. Since this means that f^2 is a holomorphic function on \mathbb{D} belonging to $L^1(\mathbb{D}, d\sigma)$ the following lemma completes the proof. \square

Lemma 2. *Let f be a holomorphic function on \mathbb{D} . If $f \in L^1(\mathbb{D}, d\sigma)$ then $f = 0$.*

Proof. Let $f(z) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} a_n z^n$ and suppose that the series converges in \mathbb{D} . Denote $z = |z|e^{i\varphi}$. The functions $e^{-in\varphi} f(z)$ belong to $L^1(\mathbb{D}, d\sigma)$ for all $n \in \mathbb{Z}$. Moreover, for $n \geq 0$ we have

$$\int_{\mathbb{D}} e^{-in\varphi} f(z) d\sigma = \lim_{r \rightarrow 1-} \int_{|z| < r} e^{-in\varphi} f(z) d\sigma = 8\pi a_n \lim_{r \rightarrow 1-} \int_0^r \frac{\rho^{n+1}}{(1 - \rho^2)^2} d\rho.$$

Since the last integral diverges as $r \rightarrow 1-$ it necessarily holds $a_n = 0$. \square

Remark 3. On the Euclidean plane \mathbb{R}^2 the following Aharonov–Casher theorem is valid [1]: *If $B(x, y)$ is a "regular" function with a compact support then $\dim \text{Ker}(H^+ \oplus H^-) = \langle |\Phi| \rangle$ where*

$$\Phi = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} B dx dy$$

is the magnetic flux, and for $x \geq 0$,

$$\langle x \rangle = \begin{cases} [x], & \text{if } x \notin \mathbb{Z}, \\ x - 1, & \text{if } x \in \mathbb{Z} \text{ and } x > 0, \\ 0, & \text{if } x = 0, \end{cases}$$

(here $[x]$ stands for the integer part of x). The following example shows that an analogous statement is not true for the Lobachevsky plane.

Let $M = \mathbb{D}$ and $B(z, \bar{z}) = \lambda^2(|z|)F(|z|)$, where

$$F(r) = \begin{cases} \tilde{B}, & \text{if } 0 \leq r \leq r_0, \\ 0, & \text{if } r_0 < r < 1, \end{cases}$$

(here \tilde{B} is a positive number and r_0 , $0 < r_0 < 1$, is fixed). To find a function φ such that $\Delta\varphi = F$ one has to solve the equation

$$\frac{1}{r} \frac{d}{dr} r \frac{d}{dr} \varphi(r) = F(r).$$

It is easy to show that we can set

$$\varphi(r) = \begin{cases} \frac{\tilde{B}}{4} r^2, & \text{if } 0 \leq r \leq r_0, \\ \frac{\tilde{B}}{4} r_0^2 + \frac{\tilde{B}}{2} r_0^2 \log\left(\frac{r}{r_0}\right), & \text{if } r_0 < r < 1. \end{cases}$$

It is clear that for every $\tilde{B} > 0$ we have

$$\inf_{0 \leq r \leq 1} \exp(\mp\varphi(r)) > 0.$$

This implies that if $f \exp(\mp\varphi)$ is square integrable then the same is true for f . By Lemma 2, for every function $f \neq 0$ which is holomorphic (antiholomorphic) on \mathbb{D} it holds $f \exp(\mp\varphi) \notin L^2(\mathbb{D}, d\sigma)$. Hence $\dim \text{Ker}(H^+ \oplus H^-) = 0$. On the other hand, the flux

$$\Phi = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{\mathbb{D}} B d\sigma = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{\mathbb{D}} F(r) dx dy = \frac{\tilde{B}}{2} r_0^2$$

can be an arbitrary positive number.

3 An infinite system of Aharonov–Bohm solenoids

Here we consider magnetic fields with infinite total fluxes. We start from a remark concerning a uniform magnetic field on the Lobachevsky plane M .

Remark 4. Suppose that $B = \text{const}$ and without loss of generality we can assume that $B > 0$. It is known (see [4]) that in this case the spectrum of H^\pm is purely absolutely continuous if and only if $B \leq 1/2$. If it is the case then the spectrum consists of the semi-axis $[1/4 + B^2 \mp B, +\infty[$. Otherwise, in addition to the semi-axis, the spectrum of H^\pm contains infinitely degenerate eigenvalues $E_n = B(2n + 1 \mp 1) - n^2 - n$, where $n \in \mathbb{Z}$ and $0 \leq n < B - 1/2$. From here one deduces that the operator H^+ has zero modes if and only if $B > 1/2$ while $H^- \geq 2B$ has never zero modes. As an illustration of the effectiveness of the Aharonov–Casher method let us reestablish the observation concerning zero modes of H^+ .

First, we find a function φ defined in \mathbb{D} such that

$$\Delta\varphi = B\lambda^{-2}.$$

Assuming that φ depends on $|z|$ only we arrive at the equation

$$\frac{1}{r} \frac{d}{dr} r \frac{d}{dr} \varphi(r) = B\lambda(r)^{-2}.$$

Its solution reads

$$\varphi(r) = -B \log(1 - r^2).$$

The operator H^+ has a zero mode if and only if there exists a function $f \neq 0$ which is holomorphic on \mathbb{D} and such that

$$(1 - r^2)^{2B} \frac{1}{(1 - r^2)^2} |f(z)|^2 \in L^1(\mathbb{D}, dx \wedge dy). \quad (2)$$

It is clear that in the case when $B > 1/2$ all functions f which are holomorphic on \mathbb{D} and bounded on $\overline{\mathbb{D}}$ satisfy condition (2). On the other hand, suppose that a function $f(z)$ is holomorphic on \mathbb{D} and satisfies condition (2). Denote $g(z) = f(z)^2 = \sum_{m=0}^{\infty} a_m z^m$. Then for every $n \in \mathbb{Z}$, $n \geq 0$,

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_0^{2\pi} \int_0^1 (1 - r^2)^{2B} \frac{1}{(1 - r^2)^2} g(z) e^{-in\varphi} r dr \wedge d\varphi \\ &= 2\pi a_n \lim_{\rho \rightarrow 1^-} \int_0^{\rho} (1 - r^2)^{2B} \frac{r^{n+1}}{(1 - r^2)^2} dr. \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

By assumption, the integral on the LHS in (3) is finite while the integral on the RHS converges as $\rho \rightarrow 1-$ if and only if $B > 1/2$. Hence $f(z)$ necessarily vanishes everywhere on \mathbb{D} if $B \leq 1/2$.

Let us recall that an action of a group G on \mathbb{D} is called co-compact if the factor space \mathbb{D}/G is compact.

Lemma 5. *Let G be a discrete co-compact group of isometries acting on the disc \mathbb{D} equipped with the Poincaré metric ds^2 , and let F be a precompact fundamental domain for G . Choose an element z_γ in each domain γF , $\gamma \in G$. If $d \geq 2$ then*

$$\sum_{\gamma \in G} (1 - |z_\gamma|^2)^d < \infty. \quad (4)$$

Proof. It is sufficient to prove the lemma for $d = 2$. Let us fix ε , $0 < \varepsilon < 1/2$. Consider a finite family $\{S_j\}_{j=1}^m$ of nonempty measurable mutually disjoint subsets $S_j \subset F$ such that

$$(1) \quad \bigcup_{j=1}^m S_j = F,$$

$$(2) \quad \text{diam } S_j \leq \varepsilon, \quad \forall j,$$

$$(3) \quad \sigma(S_j) = \frac{1}{m} \sigma(F),$$

(σ stands for the area). Denote by $m_{j\gamma}$ (resp. $M_{j\gamma}$) the infimum (resp. the supremum) of the function $h(z, \bar{z}) = (1 - |z|^2)^2$ on the set γS_j . It is sufficient to verify that

$$\sum_{j=1}^m \sum_{\gamma \in G} M_{j\gamma} < \infty.$$

It is convenient to employ the polar geodesic coordinates (ρ, θ) on \mathbb{D} centered at $z = 0$. If $z = re^{i\varphi}$ then

$$r = \text{th}\left(\frac{\rho}{2}\right), \quad \varphi = \theta.$$

In these coordinates,

$$h(\rho, \theta) = \text{ch}\left(\frac{\rho}{2}\right)^{-4}.$$

From the triangle inequality it follows that for any couple of points from \mathbb{D} it holds

$$|\rho_1 - \rho_2| \leq \text{dist}((\rho_1, \theta_1), (\rho_2, \theta_2))$$

(where $\text{dist}(\cdot, \cdot)$ is the distance in the Lobachevsky plane) and therefore

$$\sup\{|\rho_1 - \rho_2|; (\rho_1, \theta_1), (\rho_2, \theta_2) \in \gamma S_j\} \leq \varepsilon.$$

Since h is independent of θ we have

$$\begin{aligned} M_{j\gamma} - m_{j\gamma} &\leq \varepsilon \sup \left\{ \left| \frac{d}{d\rho} \text{ch}\left(\frac{\rho}{2}\right)^{-4} \right|; (\rho, \theta) \in \gamma S_j \right\} \\ &= 2\varepsilon \sup \left\{ \text{ch}\left(\frac{\rho}{2}\right)^{-4} \text{th}\left(\frac{\rho}{2}\right); (\rho, \theta) \in \gamma S_j \right\} \\ &\leq 2\varepsilon \sup \left\{ \text{ch}\left(\frac{\rho}{2}\right)^{-4}; (\rho, \theta) \in \gamma S_j \right\} \\ &= 2\varepsilon M_{j\gamma}. \end{aligned}$$

Consequently,

$$M_{j\gamma} \leq \frac{m_{j\gamma}}{1 - 2\varepsilon} \leq \frac{m}{(1 - 2\varepsilon)\sigma(F)} \int_{\gamma S_j} h(\rho, \theta) d\sigma$$

and so

$$\sum_{j\gamma} M_{j\gamma} \leq \frac{m}{(1 - 2\varepsilon)\sigma(F)} \int_{\mathbb{D}} h(\rho, \theta) d\sigma = \frac{4m\pi}{(1 - 2\varepsilon)\sigma(F)}. \quad (5)$$

This proves the lemma. \square

Remark 6. If the points z_γ are congruent modulo G then inequality (4) is well known and it is true for every discrete group G (see [10, Lemma III.5.2]).

Remark 7. Let $K = -1$ be the Gaussian curvature of the Lobachevsky plane and let g be the genus of the closed surface \mathbb{D}/G . The Gauss–Bonnet formula tells us that

$$\frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{\mathbb{D}/G} K d\sigma = -\frac{1}{2\pi} \sigma(F) = 2 - 2g.$$

Hence $g \geq 2$ and we have $\sigma(F) \geq 4\pi$ independently of the group G . Moreover, we can choose

$$m = \left[\frac{\sigma(F)}{\varepsilon} \right] + 1.$$

With this choice the RHS of (5) can be further estimated from above by the expression

$$\frac{1}{1 - 2\varepsilon} \left(\frac{4\pi}{\varepsilon} + 1 \right)$$

which is already independent of G . In particular, for $\varepsilon = 1/4$ we get the upper bound $32\pi + 2$. In the case of arbitrary $d \geq 2$ we have the estimate

$$\sum_{\gamma \in G} (1 - |z_\gamma|^2)^d < \frac{4m\pi}{(1 - d\varepsilon)(d - 1)\sigma(F)},$$

where $\varepsilon < 1/d$ and the RHS can be again replaced by an expression independent of G .

Recall that the group of motions of \mathbb{D} regarded as the Lobachevsky plane is $SU(1, 1)$, the group of transformations

$$Az = \frac{az + b}{\bar{b}z + \bar{a}}, \quad \text{where } |a|^2 - |b|^2 = 1.$$

Let G be a discrete co-compact subgroup of $SU(1, 1)$ and let F be a precompact fundamental domain of G . Suppose that $W(z)$ is an automorphic form on \mathbb{D} of weight $2k$, $k \geq 1$, with respect to G , i.e., $W(z)$ is a meromorphic function on \mathbb{D} obeying the following condition:

$$\forall A \in G, \quad W(Az) = A'(z)^{-k} W(z). \quad (6)$$

For simplicity we restrict ourselves to the case when W has only simple poles and zeroes. Let us note that if G is a discrete group then automorphic forms do indeed exist, see for example [10, Chp. III].

We can choose F in such a way that ∂F contains no poles nor zeroes of W . Let a_1, \dots, a_n be the set of all zeroes and let b_1, \dots, b_m be the set of all poles of W in F . It is known that $n > m$ (see [7, §49, Theorem 4]). Then the function $B = \theta \lambda^{-2} \Delta \log(|W|)$, $\theta \in \mathbb{R}$, is the strength of the magnetic field of a system of Aharonov-Bohm solenoids intersecting the Lobachevsky plane at the points γa_j and γb_j where γ is an arbitrary transformation from G . A solenoid intersecting the plane at γa_j carries the flux θ , and a solenoid intersecting the plane at γb_j carries the flux $-\theta$.

Using the gauge symmetry we again assume, without loss of generality, that $0 < \theta < 1$.

Theorem 8. *If $k\theta \geq 1$ then the operator $H^+(B)$ has zero modes. If $0 < k\theta < k - 1$ then the operator $H^-(B)$ has zero modes.*

Proof. We restrict ourselves to the case of operator H^+ ; the proof is similar for H^- . To prove the claim one has to find a function $f(z)$ analytic in \mathbb{D} such that the function

$$\psi(z, \bar{z}) = f(z) |W(z)|^{-\theta}$$

belongs to $L^2(\mathbb{D}, d\sigma)$.

One can easily check that

$$\forall A \in SU(1, 1), \lambda(Az, \overline{Az}) = |A'(z)| \lambda(z, \bar{z}). \quad (7)$$

From (6) and (7) it follows that

$$|W(z)| = (1 - |z|^2)^{-k} r(z, \bar{z})$$

where $r(z, \bar{z})$ is a G -periodic function. Hence

$$|W(z)|^{-2\theta} = (1 - |z|^2)^{2k\theta} r(z, \bar{z})^{-2\theta},$$

It is clear that $r^{-2\theta} \in L^1(F, d\sigma)$ ($W(z)$ has only simple zeroes and so the singularities of $r(z, \bar{z})^{-2\theta}$ are integrable). Consequently, for every function f which is bounded and analytic on \mathbb{D} we have

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{\mathbb{D}} |f(z)|^2 |W(z)|^{-2\theta} d\sigma &= \sum_{\gamma \in G} \int_{\gamma F} |f(z)|^2 (1 - |z|^2)^{2k\theta} r(z, \bar{z})^{-2\theta} d\sigma \\ &\leq \|f\|_{\infty} \int_F r(z, \bar{z})^{-2\theta} d\sigma \sum_{\gamma \in G} (1 - |z_{\gamma}|^2)^{2k\theta} \end{aligned}$$

where z_{γ} is a point from $\overline{\gamma F}$. By Lemma 5, $\sum_{\gamma \in G} (1 - |z_{\gamma}|^2)^{2k\theta} < \infty$. This completes the proof. \square

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